

Star, 15 Oct 1969, p. 14

'70 Pullout Would Bring Bloodbath, Clifford Says

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Star Staff Writer

Former Defense Secretary Clark Clifford said today that Sen. Charles Goodell's proposal to withdraw all American troops from South Vietnam by December 1970 is "both unrealistic and impractical" and would result in a "bloodbath" in that country.

Clifford criticized the New York Republican's plan in a speech to students at the Sandy Spring Friends School, a private Quaker institution in Upper Montgomery County. His speech was part of the school's observance of the Vietnam moratorium.

"I don't know of anyone who wants to get out of there (South Vietnam) more than I do," Clifford said. He said, however, that Goodell's plan would result in the "collapse of the military and the collapse of government" in that country.

The resulting "bloodbath," he said, "would be on our conscience . . . for a long period of time."

Rejects Military Solution

While criticizing Goodell's proposal, Clifford also rejected a military solution to the war and also said the United States could not follow present policy without suffering "10,000 more casualties" at a cost of \$30 million the next year.

Clifford, secretary of defense during the last year of the Johnson administration, apparently agreed to speak to the students only if news media representa-

tives were not permitted to attend.

A Star reporter who got into the meeting had his notes grabbed from him after the speech by a teacher, who would not identify himself. He ordered the reporter off school grounds and threatened to call police if he would not leave. The notebook later was returned.

Clifford reiterated his view as stated in his controversial article in Foreign Affairs magazine that the United States' 275,000 ground combat troops should be withdrawn from South Vietnam by the end of next year.

Would Keep Air Support

He said, however, that the United States should keep its air support forces and other support troops in the country to assist the South Vietnamese as they take over the functions of the ground combat troops.

He said that while it can be debated whether the United States was right in its intervention of the war, the country has a "moral obligation" to support Vietnamization of the war.

Clifford said that if the South Vietnamese show "they do not have the will" to end the war after taking over major combat duties, then the United States should withdraw.

He said that he entered his job as defense secretary supporting government policy and that doubts arose in his mind almost immediately. He then formed "an opinion" on the war, which grew into "a conviction" and is now "an obsession that we must get out of Vietnam."

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The New York Times

Published every day by The New York Times Company

ADOLPH S. OCHS, Publisher 1886-1895

ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER, Publisher 1895-1961

ORVILLE D. BRIDGES, Publisher 1961-1963

Oct 15
1969

Programs for Peace

The Vietnam Moratorium to be marked in all parts of the country today holds many different meanings for those who join in its observance. The only general consensus among those who organized the appeal and the vast majority of those who intend to heed it is a compelling sense of urgency in the search for peace and a determination that the nationwide expression of concern be lawful and nonviolent. No breach of domestic peace can serve the cause of peace abroad.

The quest for peace, however, cannot be left to emotional or nostalgic statements. It is unrealistic and unfair to assume that the American involvement in Vietnam is easily terminated by simplistic demands that President Nixon follow the advice of those who, in a caricature of policy-making, tell him that the way to get out of Vietnam is "in ships."

The special opportunity of a day that appeals to the nation's conscience and permits an introspective look at America's goals and priorities is to engage in rational discourse. Throughout the nation, planned and impromptu discussion groups and assemblies will be meeting today, and the university campuses will be the scene of teach-ins on an unprecedented scale. Those who come to these sessions united in their opposition to the war have a special obligation not merely to criticize but to propose and debate realistic ways of speeding a settlement.

The present disastrous entrapment is the result of years of deceptive policies compounded by mistaken strategic and political estimates and unproductive tactics. The answer now is not a panicky pull-out; the logical beginning is a standstill cease-fire, followed by substantially stepped-up withdrawal of troops. Such a course, rather than continued talk about a military victory that has so clearly proved unattainable by either side, offers the best hope of piercing Hanoi's intransigence and moving to productive negotiations in Paris.

President Nixon cannot be faulted for his refusal to end the present stalemate by unconditional surrender. But those who appeal for a break with the futile and destructive policies of the past have every right to demand assurances, in deeds instead of words, that they will not simply be fed re-runs of stale slogans about the "Vietnamization" of the war and the drying up of infiltration from the North. Presidential promises of peace around the corner have too regularly been followed by United States military announcements that nothing has changed in the conduct of the war and by Saigon's political boasts that nothing will change the aims of President Thieu.

The purpose of the Moratorium can be simply stated: to underscore national dedication to the search for peace. This yearning by young and old alike must not be allowed to fade into a mirage. It is not enough to long and demonstrate for peace; the need is for policies, not just pronouncements—both on the part of the Administration and the public. If today's observance can point to such a course, then the Moratorium

out of the prison of past errors.